

from the testimony before our Judiciary Committee of Barry Chiswick, University of Illinois, an immigration scholar, most respected, who said the presence of immigrants in the labor market:

Increases competition for low-skilled jobs, reducing the earnings of low-skilled native-born workers. Because of their low earnings, low-skilled immigrants also tend to pay less in taxes than they receive in public benefits. . . . Hardly anyone is discussing these issues candidly. We can be a lawful society and a welcoming society simultaneously [as President Bush has said] but we cannot be a welcoming society for limitless numbers . . . without seriously compromising our own future.

Part of the future he is talking about, is the future of the American worker. Samuelson goes on to say, and I quote the line from Professor Samuelson's article: "Competition among them [low-skilled workers] depresses wages." He is talking about the additional flow of illegal immigrants into our country, or legal immigrants, for that matter. Increasing competition for the American worker by increasing the number of immigrant workers available in the labor market will depress the wages for the American worker.

In another article, Professor Samuelson, says this. He notes that illegal immigrants already here represent only about 4.9 percent of the labor force, and in no major occupation are immigrants a majority. They are 36 percent of insulation workers, 28 percent of drywall installers, and 20 percent of cooks who are drawn here by wage differences, not labor shortages. He writes about how most new illegal immigrants get work by accepting wages below the prevailing rates. What would happen, he asks, if new, illegal immigration stopped and wasn't replaced by guest workers? Well, some employers would raise wages to attract U.S. workers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the Chair. He goes on to say: Facing greater labor costs, some would find ways to minimize costs. But he goes on to ask this question, and let me quote Professor Samuelson:

What is wrong with higher wages for the poorest workers? From 1994 to 2004, the wages of high school dropouts rose only 2.3 percent after inflation, compared with 11.9 percent for college graduates. The number of native high school dropouts with jobs declined by 1.3 million from 2000 to 2005. Some lost jobs to immigrants. Unemployment remains high for some groups; 9.3 percent for African Americans.

I know that is true in my State. Although we have a great unemployment rate in Alabama—under 4 percent—we still have a far too high rate among the African-American community. And 12.7 percent for white teenagers, he notes. He says this: Poor immigrant workers hurt the wages of unskilled Americans; the only question is how much. One estimate, he said, was 10 percent.

We discussed these issues in the Judiciary Committee. We had one hearing

on it. We had a number of professors, including Professor Freeman, the Ascherman Professor of Economics at Harvard. He said these things about the jobs and wages of American workers:

One of the concerns when immigrants come in is they may take jobs from some Americans and drive down the wages of some Americans and obviously, if there are a large number of immigrants coming in, if they are coming in at a bad economic time, that is very likely to happen.

Professor Chiswick, University of Illinois at Chicago said the following:

The large increase in low-skilled immigration has had the effect of decreasing the wages and employment opportunities of low-skilled workers who are currently resident in the United States.

He said this:

Over the past two decades, the real earnings of high-skilled workers has risen substantially. The real earnings of low-skilled workers have either stagnated or decreased.

These economists are telling us what other people will not. We are being told by the business community that there is this incredible shortage out there—they can't find workers so they have to have foreign workers—but now we know the earnings of low-skilled workers have stagnated and decreased. Why? If a business wants to find more workers, they will usually increase wages, not decrease them.

He goes on to say—my time is about up, but I have quite a number of others.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, may I ask unanimous consent that the Senator's additional comments be printed in the RECORD.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the floor, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I will take 2 minutes to respond to my friend from Alabama, and then I see the Senator from Connecticut on the floor.

The Senator from Alabama has made the best case for comprehensive immigration reform because if you are not going to have the comprehensive reform, you are going to have the continuation of the pressure of driving wages down, as we find our employers hiring the undocumented workers. It has been his administration—according to the General Accounting Office, the Republican administration—that has refused to enforce employer sanctions against the employers who are currently doing it. There have been three cases in the last 4 years, \$220,000 in fines. If he is so worried about this, I would say, Why aren't we after the Labor Department to try to do something about it?

Second point: For those who are going to come into the United States—and they ought to be able to come into the United States as workers, if there is a job an American does not take—there is going to be the labor protec-

tions, which do not exist today. There is going to be prevailing wage protections, there are Davis-Bacon protections, if they work in contract, if they work in construction, and service contract employees. None of that has been mentioned by the Senator from Alabama. That is an entirely different current situation. And we are going to have 7,000 inspectors to make sure that it is enforced, which does not exist now and is a principal reason why we have the kinds of results the Senator from Alabama refers to.

Mr. President, he has made the best case possible for passing a comprehensive program so that those conditions would not exist.

How much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts has 26 minutes 45 seconds.

Mr. DODD. If I could have 10 or 12 minutes, if that is appropriate.

Mr. KENNEDY. Why don't we start with 10.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, does the Senator from Alabama want 30 seconds? I will be glad to take this at another time when we have the time. I yield 30 seconds to the Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator. I would note we wrestled before Y2K as to how many high-skilled foreign workers the U.S. needed to let in for that period—you and I both discussed that in the Judiciary Committee and whether it would adversely impact the wages of high-skilled American workers. I would say that the current rate of immigration, legal and illegal—and I believe there is a growing consensus that supports this view—has depressed the wages of low-skilled American workers. I would ask the Senator if he would dispute the fact that the immigration bill he introduced would have greatly increased the number of immigrants into the country and wouldn't that have further adversely impacted the wages of low-skilled American workers?

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, 15 seconds in response. The legislation we have introduced would require that there be a job that an American worker has not been interested in and refused to accept. Those are the jobs individuals would be eligible for under the guest worker program. I look forward to continuing this debate with my friend from Alabama.

I yield 10 minutes to the Senator from Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, let me begin by thanking, again, my colleague from Massachusetts and others who have fought so long and hard over the last decade to have an increase in the minimum wage in our country, from the \$5.15 that was adopted about a decade ago, to the suggestion today that